

**TAHOE REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY**  
**Environmental Improvement Department**  
**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Prevention Program Secret Shopper  
RFP #230006

**Announcement:** February 3, 2023

**Project Description:** The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) is requesting qualifications from all interested contractors to conduct independent assessments of program protocols at watercraft inspection stations and boat launch facilities.

**Evaluation:** Proposals will be evaluated according to the criteria in section 3 of this document.

**Deadline:** February 17, 2023 – Bidding Firms' Questions Due  
March 3, 2023 – Deadline for Proposal Submissions

**Questions:** All questions should be submitted in writing to the RFP Coordinator:

Tom Boos  
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency  
PO Box 5310  
128 Market Street  
Stateline, NV 89449  
775-589-5240  
[tboos@trpa.gov](mailto:tboos@trpa.gov)

## 1. Introduction and Agency Background

### **Introduction:**

This request for proposal is seeking bids from qualified entities to perform independent quality control assessment of the Lake Tahoe Watercraft Inspection Program during the boating seasons of 2023-2024, typically June through September. This assessment will evaluate the effectiveness and accuracy of watercraft inspections being carried out, in accordance with Program protocols at watercraft inspection stations and launch facilities at Lake Tahoe.

### **TRPA Background Information:**

Established in 1969, by a Federally sponsored, interstate compact between California and Nevada, TRPA is authorized under California law (California Government Code sections 66800 through 66801), Nevada law (NRS 277.190 through 227.200), and Federal law (PL 96-551).

The mission of TRPA is to “lead the cooperative effort to preserve, restore, and enhance the unique natural and human environment of the Lake Tahoe Region, while improving local communities, and people’s interactions with our irreplaceable environment.” TRPA is the leading partner for plans and actions to preserve the environment of the Tahoe region. TRPA establishes transportation and land use policy as the region’s Metropolitan Planning Organization and works with local, regional, state, and Federal organizations and governments to facilitate a cooperative approach in implementing these plans and programs. The TRPA Regional Plan is designed to maintain a healthy natural environment, meet adopted environmental thresholds, maintain social and economic health, and allow orderly growth in the Region.

TRPA is governed by a 15-member Board. California and Nevada each have seven members comprised of elected officials and governmental appointees. In addition, a non-voting member is appointed by the President of the United States. Further information can be obtained at TRPA’s website at [www.trpa.gov](http://www.trpa.gov).

Lake Tahoe faces a constant and serious threat from the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS). AIS can devastate aquatic ecosystems, and negatively impact the recreation opportunities that drive Lake Tahoe’s economy. The Lake Tahoe Aquatic Invasive Species Program’s mission is to prevent, detect, and control aquatic invasive species in the region so that future generations can enjoy Lake Tahoe. TRPA and the Tahoe Resource Conservation District lead the program in collaboration with the public and private partners.

TRPA is granted environmental planning and regulatory authority at Lake Tahoe pursuant to the Tahoe Regional Planning Compact (Public Law 96-551). TRPA requires all projects to be consistent with the applicable development and environmental standards found throughout the TRPA Regional Plan package.

## 2. Project Description

### Scope of Work

TRPA is seeking qualified **contractors** to conduct independent assessments of program protocols at watercraft inspection stations and boat launch facilities. The assessments will take place at the three watercraft inspection stations located in Meyers, CA, Alpine Meadows, CA, and at Spooner Summit in Nevada (near the intersection of US HWY 50 and NV HWY 28). Assessments will also be conducted at launch facilities for Lake Tahoe. Two assessments of each of the inspection stations are expected for each year, however due to the number of launch facilities, not all will be evaluated in each round of assessments. Locations will be determined based on type of facility, quantity of launches, and results of past assessments.

Watercraft inspections are critical to preventing new introductions of aquatic invasive species in Lake Tahoe and is a priority program of TRPA. Confirming protocols are being followed are necessary to ensure the program is performing effectively and discovering areas to continue the improvement of the program.

Entities submitting proposals should be familiar with aquatic invasive species issues such as their impacts, means of transport and what is being done to stop their spread. Entities should also be familiar with recreational boating and boat systems and components. Entities must be able to provide a motorized recreational boat that is typical to Lake Tahoe, a tow vehicle, and personnel to perform the evaluations. Any fees that may be needed during the evaluations will be paid for up front by the selected entities personnel and reimbursed by TRPA.

Responses should include a statement of qualifications and experience working on the following scope of services:

1. **Objectives-** The selected entity will perform an independent quality control assessment of watercraft inspection program operations by posing as a boater coming to Lake Tahoe and visiting inspection stations and launch facilities. The selected entity will document their experiences by completing an assessment form after the individual visits. The assessment form will be drafted in coordination with TRPA to ensure all aspects of the program are being evaluated that include inspection and decontamination protocols, education materials/content provided, and customer service.
2. **Context of the Project-** The program operates three watercraft inspection stations and enters into contracts with 15 launch facilities around Lake Tahoe. The assessments are expected to be completed during two "rounds" each boating season for a total of four rounds (two per year). Each round should be spaced at least one month apart and will be conducted during the months of June through September. A "round" will consist of the following:
  - a) Completion of AIS Program evaluations:

- i. Site visit to each inspection station (3) to assess adherence to inspection and decontamination protocols.
    - ii. Education content and materials received from the inspectors.
    - iii. Customer service evaluation of the inspectors.
  - b) Completion of at least four launch facility evaluations.
    - i. Site visit to at least four launch facilities to assess adherence to launch, leaving the lake and education protocols.
  - c) Submission of a report after each round of evaluations (two per year).
- 3. **Scope-** Entities submitting proposals shall describe how they will accomplish the following tasks:

**Task 1- AIS Program Inspection Station Evaluations-** Assessment of program staff's ability to follow established protocols for inspection, decontamination, education and customer service, as well as an assessment of the information received during a phone call to the program hotline and program information each boating season. A total of six site visits is expected, which consists of two visits to each season.

- **Major Milestones:** Completion of site visits to each inspection station during one round.
- **Deliverable 1:** Written report of the inspection station evaluations each visit, totaling two annually.

**Task 2- Launch Facility Evaluations-** Assessment of launch facility staff's ability to follow established protocols for launching, leaving the lake and education. At least four evaluations are expected each round. Which facility is evaluated in each round will be determined by TRPA, however each facility will be evaluated at least once over the course of the two seasons.

- **Major Milestones:** Completion of at least four launch facilities each round.
- **Deliverable 2:** Written report of the launch facility evaluations each visit, totaling two annually.

**Task 3- Administration-** Proper coordination, invoicing, record keeping and completion of a report after each evaluation round.

- **Major Milestone:** Completion of two rounds each boating season.
- **Deliverable 3:** Routine invoices

- 4. **Responsibilities-** Selected entity will provide the boat used for the evaluations (as described in the RFP Introduction), tow vehicle and personnel and pay for any fees up front. TRPA will reimburse fee costs and work with the selected entity to develop evaluation criteria and score sheets.

5. **Project Schedule –**

- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| a) Commencement of work | May 1, 2023                                |
| b) Deliverable 1        | October 31, 2023-2024                      |
| c) Deliverable 2        | October 31, 2023-2024                      |
| d) Deliverable 3        | Within 60 days of completion of each round |
| e) Contract End         | April 30, 2025                             |

6. **Budget-** Proposals must identify all costs associated with completing the tasks associated with this project for two boating seasons (2023-24). Please provide a time and effort bid for each of the tasks listed in the Scope of Work section above. The initial contract will be for a two-year term but will include an option to extended for up to three additional years. Proposals should also include anticipated project costs for the three optional boating seasons (2025-2027).
7. **Consultant Requirements-** Proposals should describe the entity's experience in conducting quality control assessments, especially as they relate to watercraft inspection programs. Proposals should also describe the entity's knowledge and understanding of AIS impacts, spread and means for prevention as well as their understanding of motorized watercraft and recreational boating.

#### **Term of Engagement**

It is the intent of the Agency to contract for services presented herein for an initial two-year term effective May 1, 2023, and expiring on April 30, 2025.

The Agency reserves the right to extend contract terms to a maximum five-year contract term expiring on April 30, 2028. Contract renewal is subject to the annual review of the Agency, the satisfactory negotiation of terms (including a price acceptable to both the Agency and the selected firm), and the annual availability of an appropriation.

#### **TRPA Budget**

As a public agency, TRPA's annual operating budget is constrained. Please take this into account when responding to this call for qualifications.

### **3. RFP Schedule & Submission Process**

#### **Public Records:**

The documents submitted in response to this RFP should be considered public information and subject to FOIA disclosure. Restrictions on any information submitted will render a bid non-responsive.

TRPA assumes no contractual obligation to enforce any exemption on behalf of a respondent to the RFP.

#### **RFP Coordinator:**

Upon release of this RFP, all communications concerning this proposal request should be directed to the RFP Coordinator listed below. All written questions and requests for clarification must be received by the deadline on the RFP schedule listed below. Email shall have the subject stating: "**RFP INQUIRY – RFP #230006 AIS Secret Shopper.**" Responses will be posted to the website [trpa.gov/contact/request-for-proposals/](https://trpa.gov/contact/request-for-proposals/) in accordance with the RFP schedule listed below. The respondent should rely only on written statements issued by the RFP Coordinator.

Tom Boos  
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency  
PO Box 5310  
128 Market Street, Suite 3A  
Stateline, NV 89449  
775-589-5240  
[tboos@trpa.gov](mailto:tboos@trpa.gov)

**Request for Proposal Schedule:**

TRPA anticipates the following schedule, which is subject to change:

Date of Announcement:	February 3, 2023
Bidding Firms' Questions Due:	February 17, 2023
Questions and Answers posted to <a href="http://www.trpa.gov">www.trpa.gov</a>	February 22, 2023
Deadline for Proposal Submissions:	March 3, 2023
Sealed Proposals Opened:	March 6, 2023
Selection of Consultants for Interviews (if necessary):	March 7, 2023
Consultant Interviews (if necessary):	March 9, 2023
Anticipated Award of Contract:	March 15, 2023
Commencement of Work:	May 1, 2023

Late proposal submissions will not be considered and will be returned unopened to the sender.

**Proposal Submission:**

Electronic submission of proposals via email, file transfer, or other method is preferred. RFP and cost proposals are submitted separately, and cost proposal is only opened for proposals that meet format requirements. Send electronic submittals to [bids@trpa.gov](mailto:bids@trpa.gov) with the subject line **"DO NOT OPEN – RFP #230006 AIS Secret Shopper RFP Response [lead firm name]"** and **"DO NOT OPEN – RFP #230006 AIS Secret Shopper RFP Cost Proposal [lead firm name]"**.

Mailed submissions will be accepted if the submission is too large to transmit digitally. Please include hard copies and digital files on a thumb drive. Mailed submissions must be received by TRPA before the RFP deadline.

Address written proposals to:	Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Attention: Tom Boos 128 Market Street, Suite 3A PO Box 5310 Stateline, NV 89449-5310 Subject Line: <b>"DO NOT OPEN – RFP #230006 AIS Secret Shopper RFP Response [lead firm name]"</b> and <b>"DO NOT OPEN – RFP #230006 AIS Secret Shopper RFP Cost Proposal [lead firm name]"</b>
-------------------------------	---

All opened proposals and accompanying documentation become the property of TRPA and will not be returned. Any late proposals will be returned unopened.

**Terms and Conditions:**

- TRPA reserves the right to amend the RFP schedule or issue amendments to the RFP at any time. TRPA also reserves the right to cancel or reissue the RFP, to reject any or all proposals, to waive any irregularities or informalities in the selection process, and to accept or reject any item or combination of items. TRPA reserves the right to request clarification of information from any bidder or to request supplemental material deemed necessary to assist in the evaluation of the proposal. TRPA reserves the right to accept any agreement deemed by the agency to be in its best interest. This RFP does not obligate the TRPA to accept or contract for any expressed or implied services.
- In the event that the bidder to whom any services are awarded does not execute a contract within thirty (30) calendar days after TRPA approval, TRPA may give notice to such bidder of intent to award the contract to the next most qualified bidder or to call for new proposals and may proceed to act accordingly.
- TRPA will not reimburse any bidder for any of the costs involved in the preparation and submission of responses to this RFP or in the preparation for and attendance at subsequent interviews.
- Selected consultant(s) will be expected to sign the TRPA Consultant Services Agreement listed on [trpa.gov/contact/request-for-proposals/](http://trpa.gov/contact/request-for-proposals/). Any desired edits to this agreement should be included in the Contractor's proposal. Desired edits may not be accepted by TRPA.
- The Consultant or its employees may be subject to the provisions of Article III (a)(5) of the Tahoe Regional Planning Compact (P.L. 96-551, 94 Stat. 3233, Cal. Gov't Code Section 66801, N.R.S. 277.200), which requires disclosure of any defined economic interest and prohibits such persons from attempting to influence Agency decisions affecting certain economic interests.
- Bidder shall thoroughly examine and be familiar with these terms and conditions of the TRPA Consultant Services Agreement. The failure or omission of any bidder to receive or examine this document shall in no way relieve any bidder of obligations with respect to this proposal or the subsequent contract.
- Bidder must certify to the best of its knowledge and belief that it and its principals are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any federal department or agency. TRPA will verify bidders' status by checking the SAM system.
- All subcontractors, if any, used by the selected consultant will require prior written consent of TRPA and will be subject to all provisions stipulated in the TRPA Consultant Services Agreement.
- This contract will be funded by federal and state grant awards and is subject to federal and state grant award requirements including, but not limited to, cost principles and administrative

regulations including but not limited to travel and per diem rates, mileage rates, and allowable cost requirements.

## 4. Minimum Required Proposal Contents

### **Minimum Required Proposal Contents:**

All proposal responses should address the following matters:

Main Proposal – Max Page Limit: 3

1. Definition of the Project: Indicate your understanding of the Project objectives.
2. Project approach: Briefly describe how the Project will be managed, implemented, and evaluated to accomplish the objectives and requirements outlined in this request.
3. Team Organization: Briefly describe how the project team will be organized to facilitate effective management, implementation, and evaluation.
4. References: Provide a minimum of three (3) client references of similar sized and/or governmental accounts which the bidder has served in a similar capacity over the past two years and/or is currently serving. Provide a contact person, telephone number, and email address for each reference customer. References should be submitted as an attachment to this response.

Cost Proposal – Max Page Limit: 1

1. Schedule and Cost: Provide a timeline and itemized cost estimate based on the Tasks described in Scope of Work section. Tasks described in Scope of Work section. Cost estimates should be based on hourly rates and/or milestones and deliverables. Please provide a “Not to Exceed” cap and a bid guarantee through April 14, 2024.

### **W-9 and Proof of Insurance**

Submit a completed IRS form W-9. Proof of Insurance will be required if selected under this RFP for a contract award. TRPA contract insurance requirements are outlined in the TRPA Standard Two-Party Contract, available here <https://www.trpa.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/archive/TRPA-Standard-Two-Party-Contract.pdf>.

## 5. Notification and Selection Process

### **Review of Proposals**

After the deadline date the Agency shall review and evaluate all proposals for responsiveness to the RFP in order to determine whether the bidder possesses the professional qualifications necessary for the satisfactory performance of the services required. The Agency shall also investigate qualifications of all



bidders to whom the award is contemplated, and the Agency may request clarifications of proposals directly from one or more bidders. In reviewing the proposals, the Agency may consider the following:

1. The experience and past performance of the bidder and its agents, employees, and sub-consultants in completing projects of a similar type, size, and complexity.
2. The Agency may consider Bidder's timely and accurate completion of similar projects within budget.
3. The specific recent experience of the bidder and its agents, employees, and sub-consultants in auditing governmental entities and especially transportation entities.
4. The feasibility of the proposal based upon the performance and cost schedules, and the methodology to be used by the bidder.
5. Bidder's understanding of the work to be completed based upon the clarity of the proposal and responsiveness to this RFP.
6. Bidder's proposed language for the Professional Services Agreement.
7. TRPA agrees to make a good faith effort to contract with small, minority, disabled, and women owned business enterprises. Accordingly, the TRPA strongly encourages small, minority, disabled, and women owned businesses to reply to this RFP and submit Small Business Enterprise (SBE), Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), Women Business Enterprise (WBE), Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE), or similar certifications as an attachment to this RFP.

#### **Award of Agreement**

Upon completion of the review period, the Agency shall notify those bidders whose proposals will be considered for further evaluation and negotiation. All notified bidders may be required to make presentations and negotiate in good faith in accordance with direction from the Agency. Any delay caused by bidder's failure to respond to direction from the Agency may lead to a rejection of the proposal.

If the Agency determines, after further evaluation and negotiation, to award the Agreement, the TRPA Two-Party Contract Agreement shall be sent to the successful bidder for the bidder's signature. No proposal shall be binding upon the Agency until after the Agreement is signed by duly authorized representatives of both the bidder and the Agency.

Should the selected bidder and TRPA be unable to agree to the terms of a contract within thirty (30) calendar days after TRPA approval, TRPA will reserve the right to disqualify the consultant and select another qualified bidder. Should this process not result in the hiring of a consultant, the RFP may be reissued.

The Agency reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, and to waive any irregularity. The award of the Agreement, if made by the Agency, will be based upon a total review and analysis of each proposal and projected costs.

TRPA will contract with the bidder that will best accomplish the project objectives for the best value and in the best interests of the Agency.